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THE SLAVONIC AND EAST EUROPEAN REVIEW

The Slavonic-Latin Symbiosis in Dalmatia during the Middle Ages*

VIKTOR NOVAK

FOR a better understanding of the main part of this paper, it is necessary to point out several historical features of the periods preceding the coming of the Slavs to the Balkans. First of all we must bear in mind that during its history of two thousand years Dalmatia has not always represented one and the same territory. Its name is connected with that of the Delmates, an Illyrian tribe which peopled the greater part of the present Yugoslav areas long before the Adriatic islands saw the Greek colonists or the later Roman invaders of the Balkans, who gathered all the Illyrian territory into one Roman administrative unit, called Illyricum. It was under Roman rule that Dalmatia was most extensive. It embraced not only the islands and the coastal belt from Quarnero to Durazzo in Albania but also a deep hinterland consisting of the present Yugoslav provinces of Croatia, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Western Serbia and Macedonia. Dalmatia was least extensive under Byzantine rule. From the beginning of the 9th century to the middle of the 11th the Byzantines governed a Dalmatia which consisted of only a few maritime towns together with the neighbouring islands. The frontiers of the present Dalmatia are quite different from those recognised under Venetian and afterwards under Austrian rule.

From the beginning of the 4th century B.C., Greek merchant colonists began to appear at the same time as the expansion towards the Adriatic of Dionysius of Syracuse. Although the Greeks founded

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colonies and towns with a highly developed economy and culture, such as Isa (today Vis), Faros (the Old Town on Hvar), Korkira Melaine (Korčula), Tragurion (Trogir), Epidaurus (Cavtat), Epetion (Stobreč, near Split), the oldest part of Salona, etc., they did not succeed at all in penetrating into the hinterland or in hellenising the maritime districts. The Romans, on the contrary, in their warlike expansion over the Balkans succeeded in subduing the Illyrians, but only after a long struggle which lasted for two centuries and a half, from the middle of the 3rd century B.C. up to the year A.D. 9. It is not without significance to mention that Gaius Asinius Pollio, the general and historian, obtained from his conquest of the Illyrians (in 3 B.C.) a valuable booty which he used to build the first magnificent public library in Rome.

From that time on a gradual romanisation of Illyrian Dalmatia followed. It developed quite favourably and was very soon reflected in a rather exuberant cultural and economic prosperity, which lasted for centuries. To this day the visitor can note the numerous archaeological, architectural and artistic remains of the many towns which the Romans either rebuilt or continued to develop after the Greeks. Dalmatia gave Rome several famous emperors, including Diocletian (whose name shows his Illyrian origin), popes and significant names in culture and science. Among these is one of the four great teachers of the Church, Hieronymus Dalmata, the Yugoslav St Jere, whom the Croatians completely transformed into a Slav during the Middle Ages and made, inexactly of course, the creator of the Glagolitic alphabet. There is no doubt that the Roman culture in Dalmatia was also a product of the Illyrico-Roman symbiosis and that it inherited a good deal from the civilisation of the old Dalmatian inhabitants of the times long before the invasion of Dalmatia. This, again, is rather clearly shown by the names and place-names preserved in Dalmatian latinity.

Dalmatia represents a special type of Roman province when compared to others in the Roman Empire at the time of its fall. The German Odoacer, who overthrew the last Roman emperor, Romulus Augustulus, took fully four years more to conquer Dalmatia, succeeding in this only in 480. After the removal of Odoacer the East Goths came to power in Dalmatia too, governing it until the victory obtained by Justinian's fleet in the Bay of Salona (538). From that time on, for a long period, Dalmatia's fate was that of an outlying Byzantine province ruled by the prefect of Illyricum, whose residence was far away in the centre of the Balkans, in Ulpiana (today Lipljan) on Kosovo plain. During the various changes which shook Byzantium in the 6th century, Dalmatia was subject to the imperial exarch in Ravenna. The Avars and the Slavs swept in from the north, in dis-

organised, and later in organised bands, across the Danube frontier and gradually infiltrated the country with new ethnical elements, which at first weakened the aboriginal Roman and Greek elements (in the east) and later drove them further and further towards the south—the coasts of the Adriatic, Ionian and Aegean Seas.

We shall leave aside the important historical period of real crisis which shook the very foundations of the Byzantine Empire at the end of the 6th and the beginning of the 7th century. In the end the crisis was happily overcome after Emperor Heraclius's victories over the Avars (628) and the Persians (638). We shall also leave aside questions such as the part of the Slavs in the Avar invasions, their gradual liberation from their recent masters or allies, and the Serbo-Croatian migration into Dalmatia. It is certain that Dalmatia was heavily damaged by these movements, that it was devastated and that the majority of its towns were completely destroyed. Only a few were preserved, such as Zadar and Trogir. It is certain, too, that after devastating Roman Dalmatia, the Croats and Serbs were incorporated by Heraclius's masterly reconstructive plans as a constructive element in the Empire.¹ Therefore we are above all interested in the early relations between the Slavs and the Romans, or Latins. Constantine Porphyrogenitus called them 'Romanoi' in the 10th century and the chronicler, Archdeacon Thomas of Split, called them 'Latini' in the 13th.

The first of the Romans to inform us about these Slavs was Pope Gregory the Great himself. His statements about the Slavs are not at all flattering. In 592 he congratulated Jovinus, the prefect of Illyricum, on having been able to recover Dalmatia from the barbarian attacks, obviously meaning by 'barbarians' not only the Avars but the Slavs.² Gregory also rejoiced in the news of the victories won by Kalinik, the exarch of Ravenna, over the Slavs.³ And as the Pope rejoiced in the defeat of the Slavs in 599, he was in the next year, 600, grieved to hear about their victories. The Pope was very sad and troubled, as he informed the Salonitan Archbishop Maximus—sad, because of the Dalmatians who were exposed to such sufferings, and troubled, because the Slavs had already begun to cross the frontiers of Italy from Istria.⁴

And indeed, the ethnic frontier between the Slavs and the Romans,

¹ See G. Ostrogorski, 'Uticaj Slovena na društveni preobražaj Vizantije', *Istoriski časopis*, I, Belgrade, 1948, pp. 12–21; 'Agrarian Conditions in the Byzantine Empire in the Middle Ages,' *Cambridge Economic History*, I, 1942, pp. 194–223; *Istorija Vizantije*, Belgrade, 1947, pp. 60 sq.

² F. Šišić, *Enchiridion fontium historiae Croatiae, Zagrabiae*, 1914, p. 172.

³ 'Quod mihi de Sclavis victorias nuntiasti magna me laetitia relevatum esse cognoscite . . .' Cf. F. Kos, *Gradivo za zgodovino Slovencev v srednjem veku*, I, Ljubljana, 1902, p. 167.

⁴ 'Et quidem de Sclavorum gente, quae vobis valde imminet, et affligor vehementer et conturbor. Affligor in his quae iam in vobis patior; conturbor quia per Histriae aditum iam ad Italiam intrare coeperunt . . .' Cf. F. Šišić, *Enchiridion*, p. 173.

which was drawn thirteen and a half centuries ago, was to remain unchanged, as is shown by the thousand-year-old Slavonic place-names.

Constantine Porphyrogenitus and Archdeacon Thomas describe the fall of Salona, the principal town of Dalmatia, in great detail, and the former says that it was half the size of Constantinople. It is not difficult to explain in detail the naturally hostile feelings of the original inhabitants against the invaders of Dalmatia. A fair number of traces of this remained in Roman tradition. Like Salona, many other towns and settlements were destroyed. The majority of their inhabitants fled to the neighbouring islands, where they remained until conditions became somewhat more settled. Returning to the mainland, they were able to found new settlements, which later grew into large towns. The inhabitants of Salona found shelter within the walls of the old palace of Diocletian, and those of Epidaurus founded Ragusium (Dubrovnik). All these things considered, it seems that after the successful intervention of the Byzantine emperor more peaceful and settled relations developed between the Latins and their Slav neighbours, who lived immediately under the walls of the old and new Roman settlements on the Adriatic coast. Such intervention, however, was possible only under favourable conditions. It could not take place, for instance, soon after the fall of Salona in 614.

Economic and social elements were factors which paved the way for better relations between the neighbours. Thanks to the need of finding a *modus vivendi* with regard to the necessities of life, towns well-advanced in material and spiritual culture developed in the course of the Middle Ages. Their civilisation was created both by the Slavs and the Latins, the descendants of the Dalmatian Romans.

These changed, almost friendly, relations are reflected in the 13th century writings of Thomas of Split, who otherwise was not favourably inclined towards the Croats and was a rugged representative of the few surviving descendants of the old Latins. He tells us that after the action of the inhabitants of Split themselves, an imperial rescript of Heraclius was addressed to both sides, as a result of which peace between the Latins and the Slavs was established. From that time on the people of Split started a lively traffic with the Slavs, especially the Croats, making trade agreements and ultimately intermarrying with them.⁵ Doubtless the gradual development of such economic and social conditions led to ethnic changes in the towns themselves, which had been exclusively Roman half a century before. On the one hand, the new family relationships made the Roman urban families accept more and more Slav elements, and on

⁵ Thomas archidiaconus Spalatensis, *Historia Salonitana*. Ed. F. Rački (Monumenta spectantia historiam Slavorum Meridionalium, vol. XXVI), Zagrabiae, 1894, p. 33.

the other hand the increasing economic demand for labour could not be satisfied from among the citizens, but had to be supplied by the numerous Slavs who lived on the outskirts. In this way the Slavs too were introduced to all kinds of craftsmanship. And the Slavonic element was to influence the biological and social process, with the result that the Dalmatian-Roman towns gradually changed their ethnic character. This was the case with Split and other places on the coast. Meanwhile, these changes were hastened by another fact. Extant historical records, which were known to Thomas of Split, allow us to conclude that the already diluted native organism was almost entirely exhausted by the time of the Gothic, Avar and Slavonic migrations. Already then there existed no resistant force, either physical or moral, which could stand up against the invaders. The natives had not the capacity, for instance, of the inhabitants of Spain and Gaul, for assimilating invaders and creating new languages and new nations. Here in Illyricum and also in Dalmatia a quite different line of development was followed in linguistic symbiosis. Whereas in Western Europe the invaders were in the minority and the old inhabitants much more numerous, in Illyricum, it was the other way about from the very beginning of the settlement. Accordingly, neither a new language nor a new nation could spring out of the Slavonic-Latin symbiosis. Very soon the slavified hinterland, with its great numbers and vitality, had its effect on the process of change in the ethnic structure of the former urban population. The penetration of the Slavs into the towns, in which the original element was growing scarce and disappearing as the Slavonic element was growing stronger, became still more intensive when religious differences between the old inhabitants and the Slavs vanished. The supreme Slavonic divinity Perun, who was worshipped on the top of Mosor hill, above Split, had to withdraw before the might of Christ, just as in the earlier Split Diocletian's Jupiter had had by the end of the 8th century to cede his temple to the Christian worship. And when the refugees from Salona came back to the mainland and settled in part of Diocletian's palace, there were very few of them, as Thomas of Split confirms, who considered the fall of Salona and its inhabitants as God's punishment for their heathen and immoral lives.⁶

As conditions became more settled, a Frankish-Roman action began—that of the Roman curia and of the Frankish ruler Charles the Great, who included Dalmatia in his plans for expansion. These were in most cases realised, in Dalmatia as well as in a part of Pannonia, in the regions between the rivers Sava and Drava. During the 9th century the greater part of the so-called Dalmatian Croatia and of the Croatia of the Sava basin was dominated by the Franks, and

⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 32.

only the smaller part, the towns and islands, were under Byzantine rule. By the end of the 8th century then the Balkan Slavs, especially those in Dalmatia, had already made some progress in the organisation of the regions they had invaded in the 7th by abandoning their clan-tribal system for a type of West European state organisation. Christianity also played its part in all this. There were two streams of christianisation: the first, the weaker and smaller, came from Rome *via* Ravenna and probably Aquileia at the end of the 8th century, and the second was Slavonic and appeared a hundred years later, led by pupils of St Cyril and St Methodius.

The two previous centuries are poor in historical material and are very obscure.⁷ But by the end of the 8th century history becomes clearer and more definite. From that time there are both written documents and extant archaeological remains. The first Latin conversion of the Slavs coincided with the action of Archbishop John of Ravenna, who in the name of Rome restored the old Salonitan hierarchy in Dalmatia, this time in Split, which thus became heir to the old Salonitan ecclesiastical organisation.⁸ To that time, besides numerous remains of early Christian church-building, belong two written memorials, one palaeographic and the other epigraphic. Both of them bear witness to the peculiar character of the Latin-Slavonic symbiosis. The epigraphic memorial is an inscription on the font of the Croatian prince Višeslav of Nin, at the end of the 8th century. It stands today in the atrium of the Yugoslav Academy in Zagreb. The other memorial is the wonderful semiuncial MS., *Evangeliarium Spalatense*, written in the first large scriptorium in Split. On the font from Nin the Croatian Višeslav and the Latin presbyter Johannes, who is doubtless identical with John of Ravenna, are mentioned together. In the *Evangeliarium Spalatense* there are also a number of symbiotic elements, especially in the later records of certain Croatian bishops—their Latin oaths of loyalty to the archbishop of Split as his suffragans. The Gospel of St John shows most strikingly how weak Greek influence was in this town, which was to come under Byzantine rule. The text is Greek, but it is transcribed phonetically in Latin characters, for a Latin in 8th-century Split did not know how to write Greek characters.⁹ This Gospel was sung in Greek even in the Latin church at Christmas.

After receiving Christianity from Latin missionaries at the end of the 8th century, the majority of the inhabitants were far from having

⁷ C. Jireček, *Die Romanen in den Städten Dalmatiens während des Mittelalters. Denkschriften der K. Akademie der Wiss. in Wien, Phil.-hist. Classe*, vol. XLVIII, Vienna, 1901, p. 32.

⁸ V. Novak, 'Pitanje pripadnosti splitske nadbiskupije u vrijeme njezine organizacije', *Vjesnik za arheologiju i historiju dalmatinsku*, Split, 1923, pp. 89–127.

⁹ V. Novak, *Najstariji dalmatinski rukopis. Evangeliarium Spalatense. I. Prilog Vjesniku za arheologiju i historiju dalmatinsku*, Split, 1923.

been completely converted. But, on the other hand, the higher ranks of converts, especially princes and other tribal chiefs and grandees, showed great devotion to the Latin church and its head in Dalmatia. Many indications of benefactions are preserved in the charters of these princes, and later in those of the kings (from 925) and they tell us that very close relations existed between the church and the state authorities. This is acknowledged by Thomas of Split and shown by the foundations established by Croatian princes as early as the 9th century. It is also shown by the considerable number of Benedictine monasteries, founded not only in the towns but outside them.¹⁰ Cultural life displays a fine flowering, mostly, of course, in a religious direction. The Latin language became dominant not only in the public life of the towns but at the courts of the Croatian princes, in all public and private legal documents—exactly as in the rest of Europe. This was the case not only in Split, Trogir, Zadar, Ragusium and other towns, where it had its ancient tradition, but in the new seats of the Croatian princes, such as Klis, Nin, Knin, Bijaći and later Šibenik. Latin was used in the church, in ecclesiastical literature, and in law and administration, and it already had a tradition of more than a century among the Croats.

There is no doubt that before learning to read and write Latin and Greek, the Croats had used Greek and Latin characters in an attempt to express themselves in their own language. But there were not enough of them to represent all the sounds which this language contained. It is certain that a fair number of Croatian priests learned Latin in order to be able to read the service and to preach, or to carry out the duties of Benedictine monks, which involved a knowledge of reading and writing. Perhaps it was these educated men who tried to put their Slavonic words in Latin letters. Doubtless, they felt all the difficulties resulting from a lack of signs for sounds unknown to Greek and Latin. We have two certain proofs that this was so. One dates from the beginning of the 10th century, and the second from the end of the same century. In the first case, the monk Chrabr from the neighbourhood of Ochrida (Ohrid) knew the followers of Methodius and was himself an enthusiastic 'glagolias'. In his study 'On Letters', Chrabr pointed out that before they became acquainted with the Greek and Latin alphabet, the Slavs had used special signs of their own 'črte i reze' (similar to Ogam writing), in fact Slavonic runes, which had not the character of an alphabet. Chrabr, this first Slavonic philologist, pointed out the difficulties met by Cyril and Methodius, not in adopting the Greek letters, but in inventing a new alphabet in which all Slavonic sounds could be written. He mentions particularly the sounds *dž*, *ž*, *š*, *č*, *v*, for which there are no signs in

¹⁰ Thomas archidiaconus Spalatensis, *Historia Salonitana*, p. 35.

either Greek or Latin. In fact, as early as the 10th century, Chrabr indicated a problem which was to puzzle all western Slavs who had adopted the Latin alphabet (e.g. the Czechs up to Hus at the beginning of the 15th century and the Croatians up to Ljudevit Gaj in the 19th). Chrabr is at the same time the first apologist of Glagolitic and its phonetic advantages over all other alphabets.¹¹ The fact that the Slavs had begun to use the Latin alphabet very early is proved by the well-known Freising Fragments (*Brižinski Spomeniki*) of the end of the 10th century, which show the most various combinations of letters to represent one Slavonic sound. Indeed many other non-Romance languages using the Latin alphabet experience the same difficulty and have to resort to combinations of letters to symbolise one phoneme. The authoritative edition of the early Slavonic text, edited in Ljubljana by Fran Ramovš and Milko Kos, gives the earliest examples of bilingualism, Latin and Slavonic, on the same page.¹² Another such bilingual document is an old inscription from Valun on the island of Cres, which has recently been discussed by Yugoslav slavists. Whereas some of them think that it is only a little older than the so-called Baška Tablet (*Bašćanska ploča*) from Krk, the oldest (late 11th-century) Glagolitic inscription in Croatia, my opinion is that this bilingual inscription dates from the early 10th century. An almost identical text, which mentions the names of the *ctitors* of the Valun church, is incised on a stone slab in Glagolitic letters and in badly formed and irregular Latin semiuncials.¹³ These are not the only examples of Latin-Slavonic graphic parallelism. They exist in almost all the succeeding centuries of the Middle Ages. One characteristic inscription is to be found on the fibula of Prince Peter of Hum, the brother of the famous Prince Miroslav of the end of the 12th century. This bilingual inscription is in Cyrillic and Latin characters on exceptionally finely engraved gold and it is one of the treasures of the National Museum in Belgrade.¹⁴

One inscription which has been preserved in three languages, Latin, Greek and Slavonic, to the south of Lake Prespa in present-day Albania, refers to two personalities, St Vladimir and Kosara, well-known in the history and legends which constitute the oldest elements in the Slavonic literature of the Balkans.¹⁵ It is an echo from an area where the three streams of culture met as early as the beginning of the 11th century, and where they remained until the 14th century (when, in 1381, this inscription was made). Streams

¹¹ J. Vajs, *Rukověti hláskové paleografie*, Praha, 1932, pp. 6–12.

¹² F. Ramovš–M. Kos, *Brižinski spomeniki*, Ljubljana, 1937, pl. 9.

¹³ B. Fučić, 'Izveštaj o putu po otocima Cresu i Lošnju', *Ljetopis Jugoslavenske akademije*, knj. 54, Zagreb, 1949, pp. 31–76 (with the facsimile).

¹⁴ Lj. Kovačević, 'Zapon humskog kneza Petra', *Starinar*, I, Belgrade, 1884, pp. 110–18.

¹⁵ St Novaković, *Prvi osnovi slovenske književnosti medju balkanskim Slovenima*, Belgrade, 1893, pp. 225–8.

flowing from opposite directions are shown in a recently discovered inscription at Boka Kotorska, in a small Orthodox church of the end of the 14th century. It is a Roman-Cyrillic inscription, relating to the foundation of the little church of St Basil (Vasilije) in Stoliv and is made more interesting by the iconographic and hagiographic symbiosis displayed in fresco paintings of saints belonging to both the Eastern and Western churches.¹⁶

These bilingual examples, which in a striking way symbolise the Slavonic and Latin symbiosis during three successive centuries, point to another peculiar phenomenon which has not been noticed up to now by either foreign or Yugoslav scholars. This phenomenon, exclusively confined to the Dalmatian cultural zone and its immediate hinterland, is Latin-Slavonic polygraphy, which is not to be found anywhere in the West of Europe. First, as regards the development of the Latin script in Dalmatia from the Roman epoch to the end of the Middle Ages, we may say that it followed the same course as in Italy itself. All kinds of majuscules and cursives are represented in well authenticated examples. The same process can also be traced in documents of the cultural renaissance period at the end of the 8th century and, later, on every kind of material used for writing in the Middle Ages. Thus, in addition to the capitals used for inscriptions and for the titles of works in various manuscripts, the later Roman cursive script and the semiuncial were used in Dalmatia by the end of the 8th century, and these were two sources of the development of the mediaeval Latin minuscule hand. First came the Beneventana and the Caroline which existed simultaneously in Dalmatia for fully five centuries giving place subsequently to the Gothic script, which in its turn was superseded by the *littera humanistica* in the 15th century. By the end of the 9th century the Slavs in Dalmatia undoubtedly used the Glagolitic alphabet, at first of the round type and afterwards of a new and unique pointed type, which gradually developed in Dalmatia. After the Glagolitic alphabet, the Cyrillic soon appeared and was also used in Dalmatia, so that again a special type developed, particularly marked in the Croatian district of Poljice (south of Split). But here we must say that so great a number of different types of Latin and Slavonic script, of a calligraphic and cursive character, appeared within such a narrow space only because of the symbiosis. Thus I have been able to establish that the appearance of the pointed, Croatian Glagolitic is connected with the Latin pointed Beneventana, as slavists have begun to admit,¹⁷ and I am on the way to proving that even the shape of the Cyrillic letters in the 'Miroslav

¹⁶ It is to be published in *Spomenik Srpske akademije nauka*, CIII, 1953.

¹⁷ V. Novak, *Scriptura beneventana s osobitim obzirom na tip dalmatinske beneventane*, Zagreb, 1920, pp. 62, 66. See also the chapter 'Slavizmi u dalmatinskoj beneventani', pp. 45-50. Cf. J. Vajs, *Rukoveti hlacholské paleografie*, p. 136.

Gospel' originated in a scriptorium which was under the influence of the Beneventana script and the Monte Cassino art of illumination. Artistic production in Dalmatia, of which we shall speak more at the end of this paper, is also the fruit of the symbiosis and alternation of influences, conscious and unconscious, direct and indirect. There is no doubt that this diversity of scripts was also the result of the creative genius of the Slavs, who knew how to take their share in the general process of the development of writing. It is at the same time characteristic of the contribution of the Southern Slavs to the development of European culture in general, a contribution which up to the present has hardly been admitted at all. Although the Glagolitic and Cyrillic alphabets were used by large numbers of Serbs and Croats, a considerable number of educated Dalmatian Croats later adopted the Latin alphabet, in spite of all the above-mentioned unavoidable difficulties. The Church was one of the most influential factors. The use of Latin characters in the early Slavonic religious texts was in fact not only a reflection of the Slavonic-Latin symbiosis, but a clear echo of the compromise which was forcing itself upon the opposing and mutually exclusive Glagolitic and Latin elements, which were in essence national opposites. There are many examples of this, though it is true that the earliest ones preserved are only of the 14th century. Slavonic religious texts then began to be written in the Latin character, in the Caroline and the Gothic scripts and finally in the humanistic, all of them of two types, the calligraphic and the cursive.¹⁸ The humanistic script was to remain as the most vital in modern times as well. With the Slavs it underwent various transformations and by resort to diacritic signs replaced the former combination of letters for one and the same spoken sound.¹⁹

Slavonic illuminated codices, Cyrillic and Glagolitic, reflect the same close symbiosis. But it can also be noticed in Latin manuscripts produced by Slavonic scribes and illuminators. One can see in them the powerful influence of all the artistic tendencies then dominant in Italy. These artistic tendencies had their representatives in Dalmatia as well as in the rest of Europe.²⁰

Numerous Dalmatian Latin codices, which are to be found in Yugoslav libraries, ecclesiastical and secular, and also abroad, prove that the Dalmatian artist kept in step with his colleagues, the calligraphers of the best Italian scriptoria and illuminators' studios.

¹⁸ I. Milčetić-J. Milošević, 'Šibenska molitva XIV vijeka pisana latinicom', *Starine*, XXXIII, Zagreb, 1911, pp. 572-92 (with two facsimiles). F. Fancev, *Vatikanski hrvatski molitvenik i Dubrovački psaltir. Djela Jugoslavenske akademije*, XXXI, Zagreb, 1934.

¹⁹ T. Maretić, *Istoriya hrvatskoga pravopisa latinskijem slovima. Djela Jugoslavenske akademije*, IX, Zagreb, 1889.

²⁰ V. Jagić - L. Thalloszy - F. Wickhoff, *Missale glagoliticum Hervoiæ ducis Spalatensis Vindobonæ*, 1891 (with facsimiles); I. Milčetić, 'Hrvatska glagolska bibliografija', *Starine*, XXXIII, Zagreb, 1911, pp. 33-5.

When in the Cinquecento this art began to be superseded by printing and was on the verge of disappearing, two Slavonic names appeared as those of first-rate artists. These are the illuminator Felicijan of Dubrovnik, who worked for the humanistic library of the Hungarian King, Matthias Corvinus,²¹ and the even more famous Julije Klović of Grižani, whom Italian historians of art were to adopt under the name of Giulio Clovio as an Italian artist, and whose works are the pride of many galleries and libraries all over the world, including some in England.²²

Mutual cultural exchanges between the eastern and the western sides of the Adriatic were as lively as the exchange of material goods. The sea united the two sides of the Adriatic much more than it separated them. During the Middle Ages numerous ecclesiastical and civil personages from Dalmatia acquired their knowledge in Italy and transplanted it to their motherland. From the 9th to the 13th century the particularly industrious Benedictines were such transporters and mediators, being very actively connected with the chief centre of their order, Monte Cassino. There is no doubt that many Dalmatian monasteries, the oldest of which were founded with the direct participation of Benedictines from Monte Cassino, often entertained brothers from Italy. On the other hand the Dalmatian Benedictines certainly often visited their headquarters. On the bronze gates of Monte Cassino an inscription bears witness to such relations between Dubrovnik and Monte Cassino in the time of the great Abbot Desiderius in the 11th century.²³ It should be mentioned here that in this respect it is of no small importance that Kotor was subordinate to the Archbishopric of Bar, which had been on intimate terms with the Dalmatians since the earliest times.²⁴

While we are dealing with written matter we should not neglect a considerable number of documents which elucidate the economic relations obtaining between the Dalmatian towns and their hinterland. These also show to some extent traces of the dual influence in writing. They point, at the same time, not only to our symbiosis, but also to the penetration of Slavdom into the Roman Dalmatian towns. The transformation of the old Roman Ragusium into the Latin-Slavonic and ultimately into the purely Slavonic Dubrovnik is a very instructive example. And it is Dubrovnik indeed, at the beginning of

²¹ C. Fisković, *Naši primorski umjetnici od 9 do 19 stoljeća*, Zagreb, 1948, p. 258. (Reprinted from *Hrvatsko kolo*, no. 2, 1948.) *Idem*, 'Dubrovački sitnoslikari', *Prilozi povijesti umjetnosti u Dubrovniku*, Split, 1950.

²² *British Museum. Reproductions from Illuminated Manuscripts*, Series IV, London, 1928, pp. 17-18; J. O. Westwood, *Palaeographia Sacra Pictoria*, no. 35, London, 1843-5. The Soanen Clovio MS.: 'On a small slab, at the foot of the picture, is inscribed: Marino Grimano cardinali et legato Perusino, Patrono suo, Julius Crovata pingebat'.

²³ E. A. Lowe, *The Beneventan Script*, Oxford, 1914, pp. 60-3; V. Novak, *Scriptura Beneventana*, pp. 4-13.

²⁴ C. Jireček, *Die Romanen*, I, p. 47; *Istorija Srba*, I, Belgrade, 1922, p. 161.

the 15th century, which best illustrates the Slavonic-Latin symbiosis as an harmonious whole. Dubrovnik, not only the town but the patrician republic which possessed considerable territories outside the town, linked in a strong and vital relationship the immediate and more distant regions of the hinterland, which, in their turn, gravitated towards Dubrovnik commercially and politically. Thus Dubrovnik connected the hinterland not only with the Dalmatian coast but with the whole Mediterranean, to which its considerable fleet of merchant ships had access. Many sidelights of economic, legal, political and cultural importance may be gained from the rich store of documents preserved in the famous archives of Dubrovnik, of which the slavist Milan Rešetar, has truly said, that they are as old as the town itself. Dubrovnik was the intermediary between the Mediterranean and the Serbian and Bosnian states throughout the Middle Ages. This wider symbiosis is clearly shown by numerous documents of a legal and diplomatic character written at first entirely in Latin, then in Latin with the signatures of the contracting parties in the Serbian language and characters, then in the two languages, and at last entirely in Serbian. Although in the Republican Chancellery of Dubrovnik mediaeval Latin at first dominated, then Italian, introduced by the foreign notaries in the service of the Republic, the need for using the Slavonic language and script was gradually becoming more and more urgent. So the symbiosis is most evident in the very offices in which Serb and Latin worked together for the Republic. Undoubtedly the Serbs soon came to know Latin as well as their own language. The many-sided activities of the chancellery gradually became so extensive that an independent Serbian office was formed to attend to all necessary legal business in Serbian and exclusively in the Cyrillic alphabet. *Cancellarius linguae slavae* was a reality of the 14th century which had its roots in previous phases of development going back a full three centuries.²⁵ A mere glance at the written aspect of the commercial contracts between Dubrovnik and Serbian rulers such as Stevan Nemanja, his brother Prince Miroslav of Hum, the Bosnian ban Kulin (1189) and the Serbian Tsar Dušan, discloses clearly the same phenomena, but of course only in

²⁵ For literature on the State Archives and Office in Dubrovnik, see St Stanojević, *Studije o srpskoj diplomatiji*, XXVI, Glas Srpske akademije nauka, 169, 1935, p. 52, fn. 3; *Istorija srpskog naroda u srednjem veku. I. Izvori i istoriografija*, Posebna izdanja Srpske akademije nauka, CXXI, 49, Belgrade, 1937, p. 17, fn. 1. M. Rešetar thinks that by the end of the 12th century there was need of a Slavonic chancellery. At the beginning of the 13th century, at any rate since 1238, the government of Dubrovnik not only received Serbian writs but gave its answers in Serbian. (Cf. *Archiv für slavische Philologie*, XVI, 1894, p. 328.) By the end of January 1364 the Consilium Minus, i.e. the Government, concluded as follows: '... captum fuit et firmatum quod omnes litterae sclavicae mittendae a communi Ragusii, quae videbuntur domino Rectori et parvo consilio registrandae, quod debeant registrari in uno quaterno.' Cf. V. Bogišić - C. Jireček, *Liber statutorum civitatis Ragusii compositus anno 1272*, Monumenta historico-juridica Slavorum Meridionalium, 9, Zagrabiae, 1904, p. 351.

territories in which such Slavonic-Latin symbiosis was possible and where vital necessities made it indispensable.²⁶

In view of what has been said, it may seem to some that after the 7th or 8th century, when Latins and Slavs settled down to peaceful relations, this symbiosis continued in idyllic peace and harmony. In point of fact, however, there were conflicts and hostilities, periodical and of varying and even permanent duration. There were conflicts even among homogeneous towns in Dalmatia, as that between Split and Trogir, which are described in considerable detail by Thomas of Split in the 13th century. More serious conflicts arose particularly during the periods in which Dalmatian towns were the victims of invasion by Venice, which ever since the 9th century had aspired to conquer Dalmatia, so as to have a base against the Croats, who hindered Venetian navigation in the Adriatic and threatened Venetian commercial ascendancy not only in the Adriatic but in the Levant. The great rival of Venice was Dubrovnik. The periodical invasions of the Dalmatian towns had their repercussions on their relations with the Croats of the interior, who had defended their positions most vigorously ever since the 9th century, courageously resisting all Venetian attempts at conquest. In defending themselves, the Croats also defended the Dalmatian towns, in which they had represented a considerable part of the population from early times. In the towns which Venice succeeded in annexing for a certain time, she created, partly through her officials, a party of her own, which in the more or less autonomous Dalmatian communities was always inimically disposed towards both the urban and the rural Slavs. Through her supporters Venice introduced elements of discord, and not infrequently of conflict into the Slavonic-Latin symbiosis. And by her military campaigns in Dalmatia Venice left deeply rooted antagonisms which could not be erased even by time, because they involved interests active through the centuries. Very often the Slavs either damaged or destroyed Venetian fleets; more than one doge lost his life during these campaigns in Dalmatia; and even the Venetian victories were won with heavy losses. All this created a permanently hostile atmosphere which, especially through the supporters of Venice, was extended to the Slavonic-Latin symbiosis.

Social and political relations became more and more strained, particularly in the religious sphere. The clergy, who used the Glagolitic alphabet and advocated the use of the Slavonic language in the religious services, were almost constantly at war with the Latins, who

²⁶ Lj. Stojanović, *Stare srpske povelje i pisma*, I, Zbornik za istoriju i književnost srpskog naroda. Srpska Kraljevska akademija, I odeljenje, knjiga XIX. Belgrade, 1929 (with facsimiles T.I-III). A. V. Solovjev, *Odabrani spomenici srpskog prava od XII do kraja XV veka*, Belgrade, 1926, p. 6.

considered their aspirations heretical. They were supported in this by the highest authorities in Rome. There could be no compromise between the Latin and the Glagolitic parties, and this age-old conflict often made Slavonic-Latin relations very difficult. It goes without saying that in this religious-national conflict Venice was on the side of the Latins as representing the pure Italian idea; on the other hand, glagolism was the strongest defence of the Croats against romanisation.

More than any other Dalmatian town, Zadar resisted the domination of Venice. Venice attempted in all possible ways to overcome it. From 1115 to 1202 the people of Zadar fought eleven battles against Venice before yielding to her mercenaries. These were Crusaders on their way *via* Venice to their fourth invasion of Palestine. Zadar fell a victim to the bargain between these Crusaders and the Venetian Doge Enrico Dandolo and was destroyed and plundered and a large part of its inhabitants was put to the sword. The people of Zadar brought out their ancient cross and set it up on the town walls, hoping the invaders would spare them, but without avail. It was a barbarous destruction of a Christian town—‘Jadres en Esclavonie’, as it was called in the chronicle of one of the participants in this Crusade, the chronicler and marshal Geoffroi de Villehardouin, who faithfully described it. The Crusaders soon justified their shameful deed to Pope Innocent II and went on to seize Byzantium. The Pope did not excommunicate them ‘because he knew very well that it was not possible to serve God without the army’.²⁷ Presently it was the turn of Dubrovnik, which remained under Venetian rule from 1205 to 1358, while retaining its internal republican order. Whenever favourable circumstance permitted, the towns would throw off the hated Venetian yoke, only to be subdued again. Such vicissitudes are recorded up to 1409, when the Neapolitan King Ladislav, who was a pretender to the Hungarian-Croatian throne, relinquished his claim on Dalmatia to Venice during the struggle against King Sigismund. From that time on Venice gradually acquired other towns and parts of Dalmatian territory and ruled there until her fall in 1797. During that time she took care to stay, as far as possible, the natural process by which the chief coastal towns were becoming increasingly Slavonic. Ever since the 12th century the Latin-Roman element there had been in the minority, although it was favoured by the

²⁷ Geoffrey de Villehardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople*. See the edition of P. Skok in *Tri starofrancuske hronike o Zadr u godini 1202*, Zagreb, 1951, p. 84: ‘Li rois de Ungrie si nos tost Jadres en Esclavonie, qui est unes des plus forz citez del monde . . .’ These are the words of the Doge Enrico Dandolo, who clearly says that Zadar is Slavonic. Thomas Spalatensis in his *Historia Salonitana* (p. 83), speaking about the occupation of Zadar, considers this act as God’s punishment, because the people of Zadar had given shelter to the Bogumils, who were in a great majority in the neighbouring Bosnia and had begun to influence the patricians of Zadar.

Venetian authorities. So it was too late to do anything. Slavdom was so deeply rooted in the towns that even the rude hand of Venice could not uproot it. At last Venice had to content herself with the most general exploitation not only of Dalmatian raw materials but of man-power and military power, which, in the Venetian galleys, maintained Venice's political and commercial control of the sea. Or, as the old writer Mijo Koludrović of Split says in his manuscript 'The Vendetta', the glory of the war belonged to the Venetians, but the wars (he was thinking of the wars with Turkey) were won by the Dalmatians, who protected themselves and Italy from Ottoman aggression.²⁸ As a reward Venice forced on Dalmatia a cruel system of exploitation.

The Latin urban culture, as we have said, could not be isolated from its background. For almost every Dalmatian town it is possible to reconstruct a picture of Slavonic penetration into essentially Roman towns simply from evidence based on personal and family names.²⁹ As soon as this penetration began, whether in the 7th century or later, i.e. when the neighbouring Slavs, according to Thomas of Split, became for the Latins 'paccati et familiares', Slavonic blood began to dilute Latin blood. Slavonic women were the first to bring their language and customs into the Latin home. The mother, playing the dominant part in bringing up the children she had borne her Latin husband, would teach them her language and imbue them with the sentiments associated with it. So very early a new phenomenon, unknown to Italian towns, appears in these Dalmatian towns, i.e. a Slavonic-Latin bilingualism, first in the family and afterwards, in the course of centuries, in the whole town. The Latin and later the Venetian dialect remained, however, the official medium of communication, whereas in private life bilingual speech was becoming more and more common. The Latin language in Dalmatia and its gradual disappearance and vulgarisation have been the subject of many scientific works. After Jireček and M. Bartoli, P. Skok has dealt with this problem in numerous studies and has arrived at conclusions which prove these facts, though Italian scholarship, especially that of the fascist period, has opposed them with political arguments.³⁰ It is at any rate very significant for the

²⁸ C. Fisković, *Naši primorski umjetnici*, p. 244.

²⁹ G. Novak, *Prošlost Dalmacije*, I, Zagreb, 1944, pp. 175-80. One has only to open certain digests of materials published by the Yugoslav Academy of Science in Zagreb and the Serbian Academy in Belgrade and turn over the pages of the *Indices nominum personarum*, in which names of scholars of Dalmatian origin are mentioned, to get a fair picture of the ethnic structure of those towns. Among these names we find F. Rački, T. Smičiklas, J. Gelčić, J. Radonić, G. Cremošnik, M. Dinić and A. Mayer.

³⁰ M. Bartoli, *Das Dalmatische*, I-II, Vienna, 1906; P. Skok, *Pojave vulgarno-latinskoga jezika na natpisima rimske provincije Dalmacije*, Zagreb, 1915; *Dolazak Slovena na Mediteran*, Split, 1934; 'O simbiozi i nestanku starih Romana u Dalmaciji i na Primorju u svijetlu onomastike', *Razprave* . . . IV, Ljubljana, 1928; *Slavenstvo i romanstvo na Jadranskim otocima. Toponomastička ispitivanja*, I-II, Zagreb, 1950.

linguistic transformation in the Dalmatian towns that the Dalmatian Romans took from the Slavs their onomastic system, their pet-names and their suffixes. The Slavs, on the other hand, took from the Romans their Christian names and gave them their own forms, so that we can hardly recognise their Roman origin. It is difficult for one who is not familiar with this problem to realise that, for example, the Croatian 'Dinko' came from the Latin 'Dominicus'.³¹ The disappearance of Latin in the Dalmatian towns was not simultaneous. In some places the language disappeared earlier, in others later, and in others it lasted till very late. It has been established that Latin could still be heard on the island of Krk at the end of the 19th century, spoken by a man who was doubtless the last descendant of the old Romans. The Venetian authorities imposed a quite different language. Such mediaeval epidemics as the plague weakened the original population of the towns, and but for fresh blood from the Slavonic hinterland, it would have completely died out.

As the legal documents of the Dalmatian towns were written mostly in Latin, some have tried to conclude that in the later centuries, from the 13th onwards, life there was pervaded by Roman speech and spirit. But these same legal documents show some of the peculiarities of the vulgarised Latin language, as was quite accurately remarked, in the case of the Latin used in Dubrovnik, by the Italian humanist and director of the municipal school in Dubrovnik, Philippus de Diversis; and as regards the penetration of Slavonic elements into Dalmatian legal terminology, by Johannes Lucius of Trogir, the historian of the 17th century. What is more, municipal councils were obliged as early as the 13th century to announce their decisions in both Latin and Slavonic.³²

The Slavonic transformation of these towns did not proceed at the same rate everywhere and the Slavs were not always accepted gladly. For example, Zadar was among the first towns to show the transformation, and that very early and from the lowest to the highest

³¹ P. Skok, *Dolazak Slovena na Mediteran*, p. 124.

³² Ph. de Diversis de Quartegianis lived in Dubrovnik from 1434-40 and wrote *Situs aedificiorum, politiae at laudabilium consuetudinum inclytae civitatis Ragusii* (Ed. V. Brunelli, Zara, 1882, p. 70). A new edition is being prepared for the publications of the Historical Institute of the Serbian Academy under the editorship of J. Tadić and I. Božić. Johannes Lucius (Ivan Lučić), *De regno Dalmatiae et Croatiae libri sex*, Amstelodami, 1666, l. VI, c. II (*De moribus Dalmatarum recentioribus*). Lucius was the first to point out Slavonicisms in Latin legal terminology. He gives several characteristic examples from the statutes of Dubrovnik and Zadar in *Memorie istoriche di Tragurio ora detto di Traù*, Venetia, 1674, p. 192, in the chapter headed 'Delle leggi, statuti e quante sorti di lingue fossero in uso in Dalmatia', pp. 190 sq. In Trogir all public decisions of the Council had to be announced to the people in both Latin (not Italian) and Croatian, as we may see from a document dated 26 October 1325: 'Caveconus Preco Communis Traguriensis panivit et publicavit sub Logia Communis in lingua Latina et Slava in omnibus prout in ipsa commissione plenius continentur'. (*Ibid.*, p. 203). Of course, in the northern Adriatic zone, from Pula to Zadar, where the Glagolitic alphabet was used, legal documents were written in Slavonic.

social strata. Documents show that in 918 the first-known prior Andreas had a daughter Dobruša (Dobrosia) with a typical Slavonic non-Christian name.³³ At the end of the 10th century (986) the tribune of the town was Črneka, which is again a Slavonic name, and his brother was Dobro.³⁴ In the 11th century the priors of Zadar were again persons with obviously Slavonic names, such as Grubiša, Drago, Vitača, Desinja, and it was the same with other municipal dignitaries.³⁵ Of course, the names of the lower classes of citizens, of craftsmen and other workers and farmers, seldom appear in the documents, and when they do, they are all Slavonic. That they were in the majority is indicated in a contemporary account, which relates that in the 12th century (1177) Pope Alexander III, when travelling *via* Zadar to Venice to meet Frederic Barbarossa over some controversial questions, was welcomed by Slavs in Zadar. Pope Alexander's biographer, in *Acta Alexandri pontificis*, speaking of the Pope's four days' sojourn there, says that he was welcomed by its citizens in the cathedral of St Stošija (Anastasia), 'immensis laudibus et canticis altissime resonantibus in eorum Sclavica lingua'.³⁶ And yet Italian historians entertain doubts about such testimony, although it comes from their own countryman Romualdo di Guarna, Archbishop of Salerno, and ultimately from the second chronicle of Cardinal Bosone Breakspear, both of them confidants of Pope Alexander III himself.³⁷

However, the Venetians themselves, more than anybody else, give proofs of a completely Slavonic Zadar. Thus, the already mentioned Doge Dandolo told the Crusaders, before the invasion of Zadar, that it was in Slavonia ('en Esclavonie'). And Thomas of Split, also a Latin, says that all the nobles of Zadar received and protected the Bosnian heretics, which means the Slavs. And when Venice, with the help of the Crusaders, took Zadar, she had a lot of trouble ahead. There were constant uprisings, and the subjugation of Zadar had to be undertaken over and over again. Thus, when in 1243 Venice finally subdued Zadar and the numerous population fled from the town, the Venetian government called Venetians to settle in the houses of the people who had fled. Some of them tried to do so, but they had a difficult life among the people who remained in Zadar. Moreover, the intruders were fiercely attacked by the old owners of the houses which they had occupied. Venice could not solve this problem by force and at last she had to allow the emigrants to return home. In order to protect herself as much as possible from the dissatisfied and

³³ F. Rački, *Documenta*, p. 17.

³⁴ F. Rački, *Documenta*, p. 22.

³⁵ G. Novak, *Prošlost Dalmacije*, I, p. 178.

³⁶ D. Farlati, *Illyricum sacrum*, III, Venetiis, 1765, p. 197.

³⁷ V. Brunelli, *Storia della città di Zara, dai tempi più remoti sino . . . al MCCCCIX*, Venezia, s.a., pp. 344-9.

rebellious Slavs and to strengthen her own countrymen in Zadar, Venice issued orders that the people of Zadar were not to marry Croatian girls, except in special cases and with the permission of the Doge himself. In this agreement between the people of Zadar and the Venetian government, there was also a clause prohibiting the people of Zadar from giving lodgings to the Slavs from the surrounding countryside, who were not citizens.³⁸ Meanwhile, in spite of these actions, the slavification of Zadar and other towns could not be checked. There is evidence to show that the transformation was complete in the 13th and 14th centuries, viz. the names of commoners and nobles in contemporary and later registers of citizens,³⁹ and the testimony of foreigners who without knowing Croatian could not understand the citizens (1482).⁴⁰ The Venetian G. B. Giustiniani was certainly disagreeably surprised in 1553 when he had to inform his government that not only in Split, Trogir, Šibenik and Dubrovnik but in his beloved Zadar all the common people spoke 'la lingua schiava'. Thus he says of Split: 'All the customs in Split are Slavonic, and their mother tongue is so sweet and gentle that it is the first among all the Dalmatian dialects as the language of Tuscany is the fine flower of Italian speech. It is true that all the people speak Italian, too, and what is more some of them dress in the Italian way, but the women speak only their mother tongue, though some of them are dressed in the Italian way'.⁴¹ A still more eloquent document is an appeal sent to the Pope from Dalmatia in 1604, requesting him to appoint bishops who were not Italian and who would know the language of the people of Dalmatia. For only a small number of Croats know Italian, and they are mostly merchants or noblemen, 'but the common people, the young people, nuns, noblewomen and monks cannot utter one word of Italian'.⁴²

It is difficult to determine the order in which the ethnic trans-

³⁸ Š. Ljubić, *Listine o odnosajih između Južnoga Slavenstva i Mletačke republike*, I. Monumenta spectantia historiam Slavorum Meridionalium, I. Zagreb, 1868, pp. 70, 107.

³⁹ Not only are their Christian names Slavonic, but their patronymics end in -ić. See the enormous number of such names in various documents preserved in the State Archives of Zadar and published by I. Strohal, *Pravna povijest dalmatinskih gradova*, I, Zagreb, 1913, pp. 67-79. For similar onomastic material on other parts of Dalmatia, see Strohal, *op. cit.* pp. 81-7 (for Split), pp. 87-97 (for Dubrovnik), pp. 97-103 (for the islands). See also G. Novak, *Prošlost Dalmacije*, I, p. 177.

The cultural level of the average citizen, the merchant class for example, can be seen from the heritage left in 1389 by the merchant Damjan, who had a small library of ecclesiastical and secular literature consisting of books in *littera Latina* and in *littera Sclava*. 'Item unus liber Alexandri parvus in littera Sclava.' Cf. C. Jireček, 'Eine slavische Alexandergeschichte in Zara 1389'. *Archiv für slavische Philologie*, XXV, 1893, pp. 157-8.

⁴⁰ I. Strohal, *op. cit.*, p. 125; M. Kombol, *Povijest hrvatske književnosti do narodnog preporoda*, Zagreb, 1945, p. 21.

⁴¹ Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, VIII, pp. 197, 205, 208, 215, 222, 250, 262.

⁴² 'Non negamus quidem linguae Venetae usum esse aliquem apud Illyricos vel mercatores propter commercia vel nobiles propter elegantiam; verum plebs, iuventus, virgines sacrae, nobiles feminae, monachi, linguae Venetae ne apicem quidem norunt.' Lj. Karaman, *Dalmacija kroz vjekove u historiji i umjetnosti*, Split, 1934, p. 132, fn. 2.

formation of the Dalmatian towns took place. All things considered, it seems that it happened much earlier and more completely in Zadar, Trogir and Split, probably on Rab too, on Krk and the other islands, and somewhat later in Dubrovnik. Trogir had certainly been slavified by the middle of the 13th century. When the Tatars besieged the town they sent emissaries calling upon the citizens in the Slavonic language to deliver up King Bela III, to whom they had given shelter, and promising to spare them if they betrayed the king. We learn this from Thomas of Split, a contemporary witness of the Tatar invasion of Dalmatia.⁴³ Dubrovnik had quite changed its ethnic physiognomy by the 14th century. Desiring to please the King of France, the people of Dubrovnik sent him (1383) some of their national garments, which were of purely Slavonic origin. Such were *valjenica* ('baretta schiavona'), *opanci* (plaited shoes), *župa* ('giupa'), *košulja sa ošvama* (shirt with embroidered bands—'oscve'), and *podvezače* (stockings with garters—'con le podvesaze').⁴⁴ Benedetto Ramberti (1503–47), secretary to the Venetian Senate, when passing through Dubrovnik on his way to Turkey on a diplomatic mission in 1553, said that all the women in Dubrovnik spoke Slavonic and their husbands Slavonic and Italian.⁴⁵

The second half of the 15th and the first half of the 16th century already show considerable results of an enthusiastic humanism in the field of literature, which is more markedly Slavonic than Latin. In Dubrovnik and Split, on Hvar, in Zadar and other places, literature begins to appear, proving that the Slavonic spirit was predominant, if stimulated to new efforts by Italian humanism. Certain writers were still the living representatives of the old Slavonic-Latin symbiosis and they wrote in both Latin and Slavonic. One of the brilliant figures who represented the connection between Latin and Slavonic humanism was Aelius Lampridius Cerva-Cervinus of Dubrovnik (1463–1520), whose name appears in Croatian documents as Crijević, or Črijević. He had made his name in Rome as a poet and had belonged to the Academy of Pomponius Laetus, where he won his laurels, and now as *poeta laureatus* he celebrated his native town, which was among the first in Dalmatia to give a warm welcome to the humanistic muses.⁴⁶ At the same time the foundations of Croatian literature were laid. The father of this literature, a contemporary of the famous poets of Dubrovnik, Šiško Menčetić, Đore Držić and Andrija Čubranović, was Marko Marulić of Split (1450–1524), whose very personality represents the most harmonious form of the humanistic symbiosis of the Latin and Croatian elements. Marulić

⁴³ Thomas archidiaconus, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

⁴⁴ I. Strohal, *op. cit.*, op. 140.

⁴⁵ I. Strohal, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

⁴⁶ B. Vodnik, *Povijest hrvatske književnosti*, Zagreb, 1913, p. 73; M. Kombol, *op. cit.*, pp. 63–74.

was known all over the world by his philosophical and ethical works in Latin, which went through numerous editions and were translated into Italian, German, Portuguese and French. This shows what a wide interest was aroused among his contemporaries by Marulić's works. But Marulić was also the first poet in Split who wrote in Croatian, although he was enthusiastic about humanism and the classical languages and had translated the Slavonic chronicle of Pope Dukljanin into Latin, so that the outside world might learn something about the past of the Southern Slavs. Certainly, this period of early humanism in Dalmatia gave the clearest indication of the the Slavonic-Latin symbiosis in the field of culture and provided a sound basis for vernacular literature.⁴⁷

This period also gave the most remarkable manifestation of artistic creation in Dalmatia. Architecture, painting and sculpture all had old and deep roots, having developed both independently and in connection with Roman influence on the frontiers of the Roman world.

It is difficult even for an expert to struggle through the mass of contradictions, inconsistencies and hesitations of certain foreign historians of art who have dedicated their knowledge and research to the study of Dalmatian mediaeval art, architecture, sculpture and painting. Besides these historians there are others whose work is dominated by their political attitude and anti-Slavonic prejudice. These of course completely deny even the slightest participation of the Slavs in the building up of this branch of mediaeval culture in this zone of the Mediterranean. According to them, everything that has been preserved from the earliest Middle Ages to the end of the 15th century, is in fact the result of the ideas and efforts either of men who came from the Italian side of the Adriatic, or of such Dalmatians as did not feel themselves to be Slavs. With good reason Miroslav Krleža, the most impressive contemporary Yugoslav writer and scholar, who has an excellent knowledge of the Yugoslav cultural past, wonders somewhat bitterly in his essay on the art of Zadar: 'what could we possibly say in our own defence before a Western Europe which denies us from the beginning? The very fact that we appeared in these regions and that we did not disappear, is one of the proofs of our guilt. We are guilty, because Roman civilisation on the eastern Adriatic coast became Slavonic, which meant for Rome that it was destroyed. These have been the arguments of the Lateran, the Vatican, Byzantium, Venice and Italy up to this very day. These were the arguments of Carolingian and Habsburg feudalism, of German and Austro-Hungarian bourgeois imperialism, as well as of Italian, Hungarian and Nazi fascism.'⁴⁸ We neither intend to develop

⁴⁷ B. Vodnik, *op. cit.*, pp. 99-113; M. Kombol, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-87.

⁴⁸ M. Krleža, *Žlato i srebro Zadra*, Zagreb, 1951, p. 5.

these thoughts nor to indulge in apologies or polemics and shall content ourselves merely with drawing attention to certain facts which will speak for themselves. Nevertheless, let us observe preliminarily that Western scholarship has lately been almost bewildered and certainly surprised by the tremendous mass of material which was to be seen at the great exhibition of the mediaeval arts of the Yugoslav people, organised in Paris in the Palais de Chaillot two years ago. It consisted of four cultural-historical sections: (a) the Serbo-Macedonian, from the 12th century to the Quattrocento; (b) the Adriatic (Old Croatian), from the church of St Donat in Zadar, i.e. from the beginning of the 11th century, to the master-sculptor Juraj the Dalmatian in the 15th century; (c) the Bosnian, from the period of the anti-Roman movement of the Bogumils until the fall of Bosnia and its subjugation by the Turks (1463); and (d) the Slovenian, or the Alpine-Gothic component. Taken together as well as separately, all these elements spoke most impressively to cultured and learned observers of an extraordinary historical wealth, whose logical sequence and excellent reproductions drew a picture as vivid as real life *in situ*. The Dalmatian section gave an answer to many obscure and inaccurate hypotheses of earlier historians.

First of all there is the much neglected old Croatian ornamental art as seen on numberless extant stone tablets from the 8th to the end of the 11th century from all parts of Dalmatia. And this characteristic ornamentation of interlaced sculpture, so rich and varied, on all kinds of ecclesiastical objects in Dalmatia, has been represented by many foreign historians as of Lombard origin, whereas, on the contrary, it came into full bloom in Dalmatia at a time when the Lombards no longer existed. Among leading foreign authorities, Professor Józef Strzygowski, of Vienna, was doubtless an exception, for he was courageous enough to oppose this traditional and widespread theory in his work 'On the Development of Old Croatian Art. Supplement to the Discovery of North European Art' (Zagreb, 1927). The hypothesis enunciated in this work was preceded by the author's lectures, delivered in London under the title 'Early Northern-European Church Art and Wood Architecture'. Speaking of pre-Roman building, Strzygowski described the building of churches in Croatia at the time of the conversion of the Croats to Christianity and later. Quite correctly he began by putting the question whether the Croats, like all the Southern Slavs on their conversion to Christianity, were limited to what could be offered them by Rome or Constantinople. In his witty and thoughtful speculations he favoured the idea of the self-development of the Slavonic element in the work of building started by the new church. Of course, the Slavs would apply the knowledge and experience they had acquired as pagans in building

their wooden temples and decorating them with carved geometrical figures with, at first, neither zoomorphic nor anthropomorphic details. This technique was applied in Dalmatia to stonework with the favourite interlaced ornament, at first in a simple form and subsequently in double and triple interlacement. The similarities in style between Dalmatian and Lombard archaeological finds are the result of their common source, the common heritage which both Croats and Lombards brought with them from the North. Both transferred their well-known technique of wood-carving to stone and so created a new technique of stone-carving independently of each other. That is why Strzygowski is quite right when he reproaches all those who have studied this problem with not being able to free themselves from the preconceived idea of Roman, Byzantine or Lombard influence. These investigators have also overlooked a peculiar feature of the Dalmatian cultural area in which the Slavonic-Latin symbiosis existed. This is the building with vaulted roofs on square foundations, which was brought by the Slavs from their original habitat, where they used to build so-called *brvnare* (log cabins), particularly their heathen temples.

Accordingly, we may draw the conclusion that on penetrating into the Dalmatian towns, the Slavs brought with them their old artistic heritage. It is therefore here in Dalmatia and nowhere else that we first find cupolas and stone vaultings based on the walls in quatrefoil and hexafoil forms. And here too, earlier than elsewhere according to Strzygowski, the vault developed, long before the appearance of Romanesque architecture, and it was only very much later that it became the rule in the West. This is, without doubt, a Slavonic cultural anticipation. Investigators can, indeed, find a not inconsiderable amount of archaeological evidence to support Strzygowski's thesis. This material is at hand not only in the towns and in the coastal region but in the hinterland. The so-called miniature architecture, with the exception, perhaps, of the magnificent Cathedral of St Donat at Zadar, represents masterly sketches for later foundations, which were to be planned and carried out on a monumental scale and which would require much more favourable financial conditions than those obtaining in 8th- and 9th-century Dalmatia. In any case the Slavs of that period did not escape the influence of the ancient heritage, which was more apparent and suggestive in the towns than in the hinterland. In the architectural field the development of the Slavonic-Latin symbiosis also had its positive consequences, especially in the later centuries. There is no doubt that the Slavs profited by certain artistic and cultural achievements on the western Adriatic coast, but they never lost their independence, any more than other countries did in accepting new architectural ideas from abroad. That

is why many a specialist, and still more the layman, passing through Dalmatia, has had the impression that the Romanesque buildings were a purely Italian creation, without noticing that the Romanesque forms contained in themselves the essence of Slavonic participation in their development. Modern research, however, supported by new documentary sources, amply confirms the by no means negligible contribution of the Dalmatian Slavs in this sphere of artistic production.

One has only to examine a little closer and with knowledge the period when the Slavonic transformation was almost reaching its conclusion, when the ethnical structure of the towns had been completely changed in the course of the 12th and 13th centuries—in spite of the *Serenissima* which would have checked this process by introducing its bureaucratic, commercial and even feudal elements into the towns—one has only to recall these facts to realise what a great contribution the Dalmatian Slavs made to the development of mediaeval culture. An ever-increasing number of documents have been recently discovered in the dust of archives. They tell us very vividly that all the buildings we admire today were, in great part, erected from the material contributions of the Slavs themselves, and not only of those who lived in the towns, but of those living outside as well. Many an inscription on some magnificent building or noble coat-of-arms, which boastfully extols the supposed merits of certain persons in the building of a palace or a church, is today refuted by the historical fact that the building was made possible by the financial contributions of the Slavonic commonalty—the farmer, the fisherman and the craftsman.⁴⁹ It is a fact which should not be forgotten when speaking about the culture of a people.

Thus, quite harmoniously, the Dalmatian artist kept abreast of all the artistic developments of the West of Europe. His contribution was large and varied in the building of churches, artistically carved and sculptured portals and brilliant cloisters, before the advent of the Romanesque style, during the Romanesque period and from the beginning to the full flowering of the Gothic style. Then, also, he participated in the building of the numerous splendid belfries which adorn the Dalmatian coast. And in the Quattrocento Dalmatia was to produce painters who could rival the best masters in the West. Our knowledge of these will be substantially enriched by Professor Jorjo Tadić's work on the artistic school of Dubrovnik from the 13th to the 16th century, which is sponsored by the Historical Institute of the Serbian Academy. About twelve hundred documents tell of the work of a hundred and fifty different Yugoslav artists, each of them a native of Dubrovnik or its hinterland from Hercegovina to the Monte-

⁴⁹ Cv. Fisković, *op. cit.*, pp. 244–5.

negrin coast. All this will prove once more the theory of Slavonic creative power on the one hand and, on the other, the general need for the artistic adornment of buildings, public and private, which is so completely illustrated in all the Dalmatian towns. Such a number of artists in such a small country certainly shows the cultural level of its inhabitants.

The door of the cathedral in Split, which is a great work of art, was carved in wood by the Croatian master Buvina in 1214. He was doubtless one of the exponents of the same tradition as that displayed by the fine ornamental interlacements in stone work. Even in the 13th century Buvina was not free from their influence, because he used them as the framework for his twenty-eight panels. These and their interlaced border, seen at close quarters, give the impression of a skilfully transported miniature from the codex which inspired the master in his modelling.⁵⁰ Buvina had an entire school, and the traces of its work survive in various articles of church furniture, especially in the finely carved seats for ecclesiastics in Split and in the neighbouring monasteries. This kind of art was much cultivated, as is also shown by the extremely numerous wooden seats of later centuries. Already in the 15th century masterly proof of this was given in Trogir by 'magister Johannes Budislavich intagliator, incisor et habitator Tragurii'.⁵¹

There in Trogir, in 1240, the sculptor Radovan won fame as 'the best of all in this art', as the inscription on his work reads, the portal of the cathedral, that marvellous work of art, a museum in itself, full of precious artistic detail, which so roused the enthusiasm of the well-known architect T. G. Jackson.⁵² There is no critic who would be so unjust as to deny the value and the beauty of the kind of work done by the Croat Radovan. And at that time there were very few works of this sort even on the other side of the Adriatic. Radovan's carvings reflect the abundant joy of life which he knew so well in his native country. Although he worked in the Romanesque style, he was fully himself, as was realised by Lj. Karaman and Cv. Fisković, two excellent connoisseurs of Radovan's art, which had a great influence both on his contemporaries and on later generations.⁵³ Buvina and Radovan, however, are not alone in this century. There were artists, some of them anonymous, who went even to Italy to show their worth and their skill. Such was Simon of Dubrovnik, who was responsible for the beautiful portal of the cathedral of Bar-

⁵⁰ Lj. Karaman, *op. cit.*, pp. 105-6.

⁵¹ A. Schneider, 'Ivan Budislavić', *Hrvatska enciklopedija*, Zagreb, 1942, p. 454.

⁵² T. G. Jackson, *Dalmatia, the Quarnero and Istria*, II, Oxford, 1887, pp. 108; sq.

⁵³ Lj. Karaman, *Portal majstora Radovana u Trogiru* (Rad Jug. akad. znanosti i umjetnosti 262, Umjetnički razred 3), Zagreb, 1938; Cv. Fisković, *Portal katedrale u Trogiru*, Zagreb, 1950.

leta.⁵⁴ This art, moreover, exhibited itself in the Serbian interior, where there are several wonderful examples of it, such as the monastic churches of Studenica and Dečani, foundations of the Serbian rulers. Studenica, founded by Stevan Nemanja (1183), offers a synthesis of Roman and Byzantine, West and East, the Slavonic-Latin symbiosis, and Dečani is the foundation of King Stevan Uroš III, built from 1327 to 1335 by the architect Vido of Kotor and the master Gjorgje with his brothers Dobroslav and Nikola.⁵⁵ To the same period belongs the genius of Miha of Bar (Antivari), who was obviously the Montenegrin from the coast who built the glorious Franciscan cloister in Dubrovnik.⁵⁶ This harmonious quadrangle is in no way inferior to the most beautiful of its time in Italy.

The Slavonic-Latin symbiosis in art which gave such fruitful results, was supplemented by foreign artists, in the first place by Italians who found employment in the Dalmatian towns. We find a considerable number of them in the 14th and 15th centuries. They went all over Europe as far as Russia to earn their living and stayed only at such places as afforded the cultural and material conditions for their work. And Dalmatia indeed did not lack these. Let us mention only Nicolo Corbo of Venice, Giovanni da Siena, Bonino da Milano, Onofrio of Naples, Pietro Martini of Milan, Nicolo Fiorentino and others. But the stream of foreign artists did not lessen the activity of the local artists from Dalmatia and the Slavonic hinterland, as is convincingly shown in the above-mentioned publication of Professor Tadić. The waves of Slavonic newcomers from the Dalmatian hinterland were started especially by the Turkish invasions, and the more gifted boys were employed in the workshops of the Dalmatian stone-cutters, jewellers, carvers, painters and other artisans. Out of the numerous members of this auxiliary artist-artisan force the more capable and more gifted would be sorted out and would appear as independent artists of greater or less importance. They would take part in building town walls and towers, town halls, granaries, arsenals, wells, churches, belfries and palaces, they would carve architectonic details and sculptured ornaments, portals, colonnades, court-yards and balconies and they would build houses for merchants and prosperous citizens, which are today to be seen in the picturesque streets of many Dalmatian towns.

In the 15th century Georgius Dalmata, Juraj the Dalmatian from Zadar, reached a high degree of artistic achievement as an architect and sculptor working on the more important buildings in Šibenik (the cathedral), Split and Dubrovnik. His works show a skilful artist

⁵⁴ Gj. Bošković, 'Simeon Dubrovčanin'. *Srpski književni glasnik*, 1938, pp. 144–8.

⁵⁵ M. Vasić, *Žiža i Lazarica. Studije iz srpske umetnosti srednjeg veka*, Belgrade, 1928, pp. 5–7.

⁵⁶ M. Vasić, *Arhitektura i skulptura u Dalmaciji od početka IX do početka XV veka*, Belgrade, 1922, pp. 244–9.

in the Gothic style. His influence may be seen in his followers, Ivan Pribislavić and Petar Brčić of Šibenik.

In the 15th and 16th centuries the works of Ognjanović, Ugrinović, Božidarović, Dobričević, Hamzić, Milović and many others were greatly appreciated in Dubrovnik, though they are less well-known abroad. But foreigners, on the other hand, know more about the Dalmatian artists who flourished in Italy, where they were regularly numbered among Italian artists as *schiaconi* or *dalmate*, for they never hid or denied their origin, any more than the Italians who worked outside Italy did theirs. But foreign scholarship has accounted them Italians. Such was Nicolo dell'Arca, called Dalmata and Schiavone, given by his contemporaries in the 15th century the sobriquets of *fantasticus et barbarus* and hailing from Bar in Montenegro. His 'Lamentation over Christ' in Bologna seems as if it had been inspired by the Montenegrin national songs of mourning (*narikače*). There is an idea that he was Michelangelo's teacher. Then there was Giovanni Dalmata, Giovanni da Traù, i.e. Ivan Duknović of Trogir (died 1509), who became famous in Italy because of his cenotaph for Pope Paul III. Francesco and Luciano de Aurana are Franjo and Lucijan Vranjanin (died 1482), the former a well-known painter and the latter an architect, who worked in Italy and France. The drawings and designs for the princely palace in Urbino have notes written in the Glagolitic alphabet. Yet they have also been appropriated by Italian art. Georgius Sclavonus, Dalmaticus, Squarcioni discipulus or Scholaris is none other than Juraj Čulino-
vić of Skradin (died 1505), whose pictures adorn many galleries, including the National Gallery in London. In the Cinquecento there were also Slavonic artists of considerable importance in Italy. One of these was Andreas Schiavone, Andrea Meldolla detto Schiavone, who was none other than Andrija Medulić of Šibenik, whom the historian and painter Marco Boschini called 'terribile Andrea, quel gran Schiavon' in his work *La carta del navegar pittoresco*, displaying an allegorical ship of Venetian painters, in which Medulić was given the helm of the ship of which Titian was the captain, while other famous masters were below Medulić and, including Tintoretto himself, only members of the crew.⁵⁷ Another was the celebrated Giulio Clovio (died 1578), whose art of illumination won him fame as an artist for whose work many European feudal potentates competed. He was a Croat—Klović—from the Grižani coast in Vinodol.⁵⁸

All these artists working outside Dalmatia are doubtless another proof of the age-old artistic tradition cultivated in Dalmatia, which enabled her sons to produce works of value and significance extend-

⁵⁷ A. Uvodić, *Andrija Medulić nazvan Schiavone*, Split, 1934, p. 70.

⁵⁸ See fn. 22.

ing far beyond their narrow local sphere. Therefore, M. Krleža says quite rightly that Avignon and Bologna, Sicily, Rome and Naples would be without numerous buildings and sculptural masterpieces but for the Slavs. 'Our artists were not Slavs only in origin or because as Slavs they signed their names in Glagolitic characters, but because their contemporaries called them and considered them Slavs, because these artistic geniuses stood out from among the common run of their times by their Slavonic creative style.'⁵⁹

Unfortunately the great creative ardour, manifested so clearly in Dalmatia during the Quattrocento and Cinquecento in art and literature, did not continue and was almost extinguished. Historical conditions explain this well enough. Venice, together with Dalmatia, was constantly at war with the Turks. And *in armis silent musae*. Venice needed only soldiers and sailors. As for writers and artists, she had enough of her own. What is more, in order to have this reservoir of fighting men always full, it was necessary to maintain it with as little education as possible. It is no wonder, then, that the Venetian Paolo Sarpi wrote to his government from Dalmatia in the first half of the 18th century giving this cynical and inhuman advice: 'If you want the Dalmatians to be faithful, you must keep them ignorant, without education.'⁶⁰ And Venice followed this advice closely. Thus all that was done in the domain of culture from that time on was entirely the result of efforts made by the Dalmatians themselves. A national poet explained the break in cultural creation during those painful centuries of war when he lamented: 'S krvi ručak, a s krvi večera, Svak krvave žvače zalogaje, Krvavim se rukam umivamo.'⁶¹

But in spite of the unceasing and obstinate struggle with the now quite unfriendly Latin element, which had no genetic relation with the Dalmatian towns, as in the early and later Middle Ages, but which was represented by Venetian despotism, the Slavonic consciousness was preserved, as well as the forces which fostered talents that were to wake again in the 19th century, simultaneously with the Italian Risorgimento which was to unite and save Italy. Venice, which was largely protected, like the rest of Europe, by the Balkan *antemurale Christianitatis*, i.e. the *antemurale civilisationis europaeanae*, ungratefully emphasised her superiority over the Dalmatian 'barbarians', for this was the name she gave to the Slavs who had made her undisturbed cultural development possible.

⁵⁹ M. Krleža, *Galerija Jugoslavenske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti*, 'Jugoslavija', Belgrade, 1948, p. 78.

⁶⁰ 'Se volete i Dalmati fedeli, teneteli ignoranti.' Cf. I. Dizdar, 'Kratki pregled pučke nastave u Dalmaciji kroz minulih pet decenija', *Narodni list*, Zadar, 1 March 1902.

⁶¹ 'Blood with our dinner, Blood with our supper, All the food we eat Is soaked in blood. When we wash our faces, Our hands are covered with blood.' Cv. Fisković, *Naši primorski umjetnici*, p. 259.

The reproachful line of a great Croatian poet of the Renaissance period, Ivan Mažuranić—‘While you were dying, they called you barbarians’—is a serious warning to all those who are unjust in their historical studies to a nation which, under the most difficult conditions, has won by its own efforts a place in the culture of humanity.⁶²

⁶² I. Mažuranić, *Smrt Smil-age Čengijića*, I, ed. 1846.